

March 13, 2023

Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B. No. 6682 AN ACT CONCERNING THE SENTENCE FOR MURDER COMMITTED IN THE COURSE OF COMMISSION OF A FAMILY VIOLENCE CRIME
Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, Senator Kissel, Representative Fishbein, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Erin Bond and I am testifying in support of HB 6682.

This proposal seeks to add murder committed in the course of a family violence crime to General Statutes 53a-54b – Murder with Special Circumstances. Murder with Special Circumstances is classified as a Class A Felony with a mandatory minimum sentence of life without the possibility of release.

I am the aunt of Emily Todd who was tragically (senselessly) taken from us in December 2018. I am now a member of a family of homicide survivors living a life sentence without Emily. A life that at times feels like a living hell after what her murderer has done to us as a family. None of us will ever be the same, it has altered us emotionally, mentally and physically. Unfortunately, only those who have suffered a similar loss can seem to relate to the torture we as a family continue to endure. A fate that now depends on the legal system to change and spare future families from unnecessary pain.

As a survivor, I feel I know firsthand why Murder with Special Circumstances absolutely must be updated. The agony that we went through with our legal system leading up to, and during Emily's trial has left me with severe emotional trauma including PTSD. The amount of fight that we had to put in as a family to be sure that the demon that chose to put a bullet in the back of her head that night, did not get a plea for lesser time, left us all in a state of panic for years. This is our life sentence but where is his? Giving him a life sentence is perhaps the only thing that could provide us as survivors with a bit of peace. Instead we must endure the constant thought that this demon could one day possibly be able to walk on the same streets again with our children.

To me the logic is simple. If individual murders a child, that crime falls within the Murder with Special Circumstances Statute. Children are typically naive, trusting and willing to believe what they are told. Women and men murdered as a result of domestic violence have those same traits! They trust their murderers, they don't want to believe this person, that they have been sharing their life with, is capable of ending theirs. The jury found that to be the case in Emily's murder. The man who murdered Emily used her trust in him and humanity in general to execute his plan and execute her! This is a ridiculously unfair advantage these types of predators have over their victims that must be reduced through a change in our laws

My beautiful niece, Emily was just 25 and had her whole life ahead of her. Connecticut must update its criminal laws to recognize the seriousness of family and domestic violence murder. I urge your support of HB 6682 and I thank you for considering the families left devastated by murder.

Thank you,
Erin Bond